

COUNTRY

Poland

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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Poland

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SUBJECT

Living Conditions in the Town of Zawidow
(Seidenberg)

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1. Area Data

The town of Zawidow is in the Luban district of the province of Silesia. The immediate surroundings of the town consist of 70% cultivated fields and 30% meadows containing a few small groves. Located approximately 1,000 meters from the town proper is the Zawidow Settlement, which actually constitutes a part of Zawidow. The climate is typically central-European with average seasonal rainfall. Prevailing winds are from the north.

2. Streets and Main Roads

The main road through town leads from Zgorzelec to Luban (N 51-07, E 15-17). The village streets are typical small-town roads, paved with cobblestones, and are in very poor condition. The average width is 4-6 meters. Current road construction is limited to the preservation of those already in existence rather than the building of new ones.

3. Population

Zawidow is a town of approximately 7,000 inhabitants. Except for 10-15 German families, the entire population is Polish. Prior to World War II, Zawidow was inhabited by 15,000 Germans. Most of the new Polish citizens are employed at the weaving mills, the produce cooperative or the railroad station. There are no apparent signs of discrimination against the German minority in Zawidow. For the most part, the Germans are employed in the weaving mills. Approximately 99% of the people are Catholic. There are a few Evangelical German families and four families which belong to Jehovah's Witnesses. The majority of the people (60-70%) are opposed to the Communist regime.

4. General Living Conditions

- Fats and meats are rationed in Zawidow. There is a shortage of fats, meats, pepper, vinegar, and sugar. Source was unaware of any black market.
- House rents are not charged according to ones occupation. The only difference in rent is according to the size of the quarters. Workers of the different

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plants do not live in special sections but are scattered throughout town.

- c. The only hospital in Zawidow is called "Przechodni" and is located on ul. Curie-Sklodowskiej. It is a two-story building containing 20 rooms. Only minor medical cases are treated there. Patients with serious ailments are sent to Luban. Any person presenting a Social Insurance Book or a Work Certificate can take advantage of the medical aid offered. Unemployed persons seeking medical assistance must report to the Health Center which is in the same hospital building. There are no special fees or charges.

The main sicknesses of the area are tuberculosis and malnutrition.

Workers may obtain sick leave or health vacations via two means:

- (1) According to occupation, e.g., if a worker has been employed in a particular job for six months without interruption and gets a doctor's certificate.
 - (2) Through the Health Center, if an individual does not have support from the factory management. The unemployed may also obtain health vacations through the Health Center.
- d. There are no daily newspapers or periodicals printed in Zawidow. Dailies like the Gazeta Robotnicza and Glosn Polskia are sent from other towns. The periodical Praviciolka is also available. They may all be purchased or subscribed to at one of the pavilions in the market place. Foreign reading material is unavailable.

- e. When a new arrival wishes to settle in Zawidow and obtain housing, he must go through the following formalities:

- (1) Obtain permission to reside in the border area from the Communal Municipal National Council (PMR - Przewodni Miejskiej Rady Narodowej) in Luban. There are three special forms which must be filled out in Luban and eight Polish zlotys worth of duty stamps attached.
- (2) Within 24 hours register at the Citizens' Militia (MO - Milicja Obywatelska) office and present:
 - (a) Deregistration from previous place of residence
 - (b) Permission to settle in the border area
 - (c) Work certificate
- (3) File petition with the Housing Clerk in order to obtain a place of residence. A duty stamp in the amount of 12 Polish zlotys must be attached to the petition.

There are no hotels in Zawidow. Travelers or transients must stay in private homes. All newcomers to the area are obligated to register with the MO within a 24-hour period. To justify one's presence in a given area, the following documents must be presented:

- (a) Dowod Osobisty - Personal Identity Document
- (b) Zawsiedzenie Pracy - Work Certificate
- (c) Ksiazeczka Wojskowa - Military Booklet
- (d) Zawsiedzenie Urlopowe - During vacation, a Vacation Certificate

- f. Conduct of the farmers who enter town to sell their produce is normal. (sic) Their means of transportation are wagons drawn by horses, oxen, or cows. The one marketplace in Zawidow is located at the intersection of ul. Curie-Sklodowskiej

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and ul. Zgorzeleckiej. The time for transacting business here is limited to before noon each day. There are frequent controls to determine whether or not a farmer has complied with the set norms for his products. 25X1

- g. There are no special-type stores or artisan shops located in "awidow". There are no places where "forbidden exchanges" can be effected.

5. Labor Market

- a. Employers have a free hand in hiring workers. Hiring is informal, but in every case a biographical data form must accompany the application. An official dismissal from one's previous place of employment is demanded. A worker may be dismissed for any of three reasons:

- (1) Disciplinary
- (2) At worker's personal request
- (3) General reduction in labor force.

When a worker is dismissed for disciplinary reasons, it is instantaneous. For either of the other two reasons, a 14-day notice is given prior to lay-off or termination.

Salary and working conditions are planned and regulated by the Labor Ministry (Ministerstwo Pracy - MP). Conditions in Zawidow do not differ from those existing in nearby areas.

- b. The average income of the normal worker is low in proportion to the cost of living. Weavers earn 350.00 Polish zlotys per month for an 8-hour day. At some of the better workshops, advanced weavers' earnings may vary from 600 to 900 zlotys per month for a 12-hour day. The 12-hour work day is officially recognized. Foremen, according to their position, earn from 600 to 1,500 zlotys per month. Source was unable to specify monthly deductions from pay but stated that from earnings over 1,000 zlotys, deductions were approximately 13 zlotys. An eight-hour day (0700-1500) without a lunch break is obligatory.
- c. Upon completion of a full year's work, uninterrupted by absences for personal reasons, workers receive a 14-workday vacation. Workers in the "intelligentsia" usually receive a full month's vacation. Absences for personal reasons are deducted from the allotted annual vacation time. Workers who are employed five years at one particular establishment are entitled to a full month holiday. A vacationer must obtain a vacation certificate issued by the Personnel Branch of his place of employment. The exact dates covered by the vacation period are noted on this certificate.

Zawidow area while on vacation.

Most vacationers remain in the

6. Places of Employment

- a. The Siew fiber mill is located on a side street of ul. Zgorzeleckiej, close to the Czechoslovak-Polish border. This factory consists of three 3-story buildings, one 2-story building, and one building at ground level. All are located in an area of 70 x 40 meters. For a long time fabric production has been discontinued and the factory currently manufactures winches. The Siew factory is presently managed by military authorities and rumors have it that, in the future, military equipment of an undetermined sort will be produced. Approximately 100 laborers and office workers are employed here. Of this number, about 20 are women. There are no private dwellings for the workers on the factory site. The average monthly wages

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are between 800 and 1,000 slots. Three shifts per day are in operation (0700-1500; 1500-2200; and 2300-0700).

- b. The Azbest fiber mill is located at 4 ul. Dworcowej. It consists of one 3-story building (housing the company offices and a boarding establishment for Polish Youth Organization (ZMP) members), one 2-story building and about 15 ground-level halls with glass roofs. The factory grounds cover a 500 x 200 meter area. Azbest employs about 1,000 workers of whom 60% are women. Three 8-hour shifts are in operation daily. Wages run from 350 to 1,000 slots monthly. Workers get to the factory either on foot or by bicycle. Silkstuffs, natural and artificial, are manufactured at this plant.
- c. The Jedwab fiber factory is located on ul. Zymierskiego. It consists of 6 or 7 three-story buildings in an area of about 600 x 500 meters. This factory is situated very close to the Czech-Polish border. Source was not able to furnish any further information on this particular plant.

7. Public Utilities

- a. All real estate in Zawidow is linked to the municipal water main system. No limitation exists as to the amount of water that may be consumed. The water when drawn is not in a drinkable state.
- b. The electricity furnished homes and factories in Zawidow is 3-phase, 220-volt current. Private consumers are allotted 22 kilowatts per room per month; however, more may be used. The current is automatically turned off daily from 1800 to 2000 hours. It is forbidden to operate any household equipment during the hours of 0700-1200 and 200-2200. The Jedwab factory has its own electric power plant which runs by the use of coal.
- c. There is no gas system in Zawidow.
- d. Source estimates there are approximately 1,000 private radio receivers in Zawidow. About 20-25% of these are capable of receiving foreign broadcasts. Source knows of twenty different instances when certain individuals were listening to western broadcasts, even though it is categorically forbidden to do so.

8. Transportation

- a. The passenger and freight train station is located approximately 2 km from Zawidow-Osiedle. There is one passenger platform and one freight platform at the station. There are also 6-8 branch lines at the terminal. The train station is guarded by an outpost of Frontier Guard Troops (WOP - Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza). Special documentation or passes need not be presented. Personal Identity Documents (Dowód tożsamości) are controlled, however.

Zawidow has train connections with Bogatynia and Luban. Many freight trains loaded with trucks, automobiles, and farm machinery pass through Zawidow coming from across the Czech border. The freight cars passing through towards Czechoslovakia are laden with coal, coke, and building lumber.

- c. There is only one road leading from Zawidow to Luban. Automobiles are seen only two or three times per day. Truck movement is very light. The greater part of the traffic consists of farm wagons.

9. State Administration and Authorities

- a. The MGRN (Miejaska Gmina Rada Narodowa - Communal Municipal National Council) building is situated on Plac Powstancow Slaskich.

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- b. The PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partja Robotnicza - Polish United Workers' Party) offices are also located on Plac Powstancow Slaskich.
- c. The MO (Milicja Obywatelska - Citizens' Militia) outpost is at 27 ul. Zgorzeleckiej.
- d. A WOP unit occupies several houses on ul. Zgorzeleckiej (number unknown). The strength of the unit is approximately 200 men. Another WOP unit is stationed on ul. Dworcowej. This unit, numbering about 100 men, is billeted in private dwellings. The WOP wear rounded caps with green piping. Saluting of officers of higher rank on the street is required.
- e. The documentation offices for the area are located in Luban.

There was no known system or schedule in existence for an alert of the populace in the event of war.

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